



# Retiree Activities Office

## Yokota AB, Japan

# Newsletter



**Vol. 2, Issue 5**

**September/October 2016**

*A publication of the Yokota Retiree Activities Office (RAO) whose mission is to support the base commander in providing information and assistance to military retirees, their family members, and surviving spouses residing in the local area. Articles appearing in this newsletter are compiled from various government sources. Information has been edited and reprinted for the benefit of our retiree population. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information herein, no absolute guarantee of accuracy or currency can be given nor should be assumed.*

## Correction to Change of Command Article in July/August Newsletter:

CMSgt Christopher M. Yevchak is the new Command Chief Master Sergeant, 374th Airlift Wing, Yokota Air Base, Japan. Prior to assuming his current position, he served as the Group Superintendent, 366th Operations Group, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.

## Yearly Audit of myPay Account Information:

DFAS recommends that all retired members review their account information on a yearly basis to insure that information is up-to-date, so that they can get in touch with you if there is a problem, change, or update with your account.

Here is a list of things to check at least once a year.

1. Update your mailing address. If you have moved and haven't told them, they won't know how to reach you.
2. Update your email address: Make sure you have an email address on file that is current. Email is the easiest and fastest way for DFAS to communicate with its members.
3. Check your state and federal income tax withholding. Don't wait until the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline to discover that taxes are being deducted for a state you no longer have to file in. You can verify and update your tax withholding information yourself in myPay. Click on your Federal Withholding to see if your marital status and number of exemptions are correct. Then click on the State Withholding to make sure both the state and the amount are what you want.
4. Review your allotments. Check each allotment and your allotment amounts. Make sure each

allotment is current and the amount is correct.

5. Have there been changes in your family? When you get married, lose a spouse or have children, the change can affect your account. From federal income tax withholding to Survivor Benefit Plan costs, the amount of retired pay you receive each month can change.

6. Check your beneficiary designations. Who have you chosen as a beneficiary for any arrears of retired pay when you die? Make sure you're still satisfied with your designation, and check your address book to confirm that their addresses are up to date. You can check this information by clicking on the Beneficiary for Arrears link in myPay.

So pick a date. It doesn't matter if it's your retirement date, birthday or the first of the year. Set a yearly reminder to look over your information to make sure your account is up to date.

(Source: [www.DFAS.mil](http://www.DFAS.mil))

## Watch for Signs of Medical Identity Theft:

Did you know that health care is the number one target, nearly as much as retail, finance, and banking *combined*, for identity theft and fraud? Your health information is important to you and your health care provider. But in the wrong hands, it can be valuable to someone else. Would you know if someone stole your medical identity?

Identity theft affects millions of people year. The Federal Trade Commission offers several steps you can take to make sure your health care information remains secure.

First, read your medical and insurance statements regularly and completely. They can show warning signs of identity theft. Look for services you did not

receive or providers you did not see. This is like seeing charges on your credit card statement that were not yours.

Next, read the Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statement or Medicare Summary Notice that your health plan sends after each treatment. Again, check the name of the provider, the date of service, and the service provided. Do the claims paid match the care you received? If you see a mistake, contact your health plan and report the problem.

You should also watch for bills if you know part of your care was not covered. If a bill doesn't show up when you expect it, look into it.

Being cyber fit requires us to be mindful of your health information even when you're not using health IT. You are the center of your healthcare. Empower yourself to protect your information. For more information about cyber fitness, visit the TRICARE website at <http://www.tricare.mil/Privacy/Cyberfit>.

(Source: [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil))

## Requesting Veteran's Service Records Online:

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans and next of kin of deceased former military members to obtain copies of military service records (includes DD 214/ Separation Documents, Personnel Records, Replacement Medals, and Medical Records).

[www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/#evetrecs](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/#evetrecs)

Once you reach the website, you have the option of requesting records online via eVetRecs, or by Mail or Fax using SF-189 Form. The online eVetRecs system creates a customized order form to request information from your, or your relative's military personnel records.

You may use this system if you are:

A military veteran or next of kin of a deceased, former member of the military.

The next of kin can be any of the following:

A surviving spouse that has not remarried, a father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother.

(Source: [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov))

## Burial in a National Cemetery:

Burial benefits available to military retirees, their spouses and eligible dependents include a gravesite in any of the [135 national cemeteries](#) with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for Burial Allowances. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Burial benefits available for spouses and eligible dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

The Veterans family should make funeral or cremation arrangements with a funeral provider or cremation office. Any item or service obtained from a funeral home or cremation office will be at the family's expense.

### Preparing in Advance

Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance.

You should advise your family of your wishes and where your discharge papers are kept. These papers are very important in establishing your eligibility.

At the time of need your family would contact a funeral home who will assist with making burial arrangements at the national cemetery.

Additional information on burial benefits can be found at:

[http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial\\_benefits/](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/)

(source: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov))

## Immunization experts to adults: Vaccines are 'not just for kids':

While it's well known the good immunizations do, there are three vaccines of particular importance for military service members and their families. Military Health System (MHS) officials want people to be more aware of vaccines for meningitis, the flu and shingles

Bacterial meningitis, a very serious and possibly life-threatening disease that can infect the brain and blood, can pass from person to person through lengthy or close contact, such as coughing or kissing. It is especially transmittable among those living in close quarters. The meningococcal vaccine helps protect against the four most prevalent strains of Meningitis found in the United States. A single dose of this vaccine helps protect against the primary strains and should be given to all 11- to 12-year olds, said Montgomery, who also recommends a booster shot at age 16. A vaccine to protect against the B strain, which has appeared on college campuses and a major theme park, was recently approved by the FDA. Teens and young adults 16 through 23 can also be immunized with this vaccine.

A lesser known vaccination is the shingles immunization. Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash to appear on the torso, neck or face. Shingles is triggered by the same virus that causes Chicken Pox, leaving anyone who has had Chicken Pox at risk for developing it. Up to one million cases of shingles occur each year in the United States.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the vaccine for those who have a weak immune system or are 50 and older, as it is most common in older adults. It can help reduce the severity and duration of the infection, as well as decrease the chance of complications.

The flu, on the other hand, is much more common and typically most active from October to early spring. Vaccines are developed each year in attempt to match the predicted flu virus strains of that season. These vaccinations do not guarantee complete protection against the germs, but they can help prevent complications or hospitalization. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, a group of public health experts and medical professionals who develop vaccination recommendations, advises seasonal influenza vaccinations for those six months of age and older.

(Source: [www.health.mil](http://www.health.mil))

## From the Director's Desk:

The next quarterly **Widows' Support Luncheon** is scheduled for 14 September 2016 from 1200-1400 in the FSS Commander Conference Room, Building 316.

Below are the briefers for that day:

Robert Glassheim - Mortuary Affairs

Manuel De Paiva - Retiree Activities Office

This luncheon sponsored by the Airman & Family Readiness Center serves as a venue for widows of military retirees to get together and share experiences and to let them know that they are still part of the overall military family.

If you know of a retiree widow who is not aware of this luncheon please pass this information on.

The **Yokota Military Retiree Association (YMRA)** will have its next monthly breakfast meeting on 10 September at 0900 in the enlisted club dining room. This meeting is open to all military retirees regardless of branch of service, their spouses, and widows of retirees. Breakfast is provided free when your order before 0830. The business side of things starts at 0900.

The YMRA normally meets the first Saturday of every month at the enlisted club.

**The Retiree Activities Office (RAO) welcomes two new volunteers.** **Rod Bradish**, (USAF Retired) who will be working the RAO desk on Monday afternoons. Rod a past director of the RAO is no stranger to helping the retired community..

Our other volunteer is **Kelly Stevenson** (USN Retired). Kelly who retired earlier this year and moved to Japan will be working the RAO desk on Thursday afternoons.



Rod



Kelly

The **RAO** is located in building 445. We can be reached by email at: [yokota.rao@us.af.mil](mailto:yokota.rao@us.af.mil). By DSN phone 225-8324, from offbase (042) 552-2510 ext. 58324. If you can during non-office hours, leave a message and we will get back to you. The RAO is normally open 0900-1500 Monday thru Friday, closed holidays and family days.

*Your comments concerning articles you see here, or questions concening military retiree benefits and services are always welcome.*